

FACT SHEET

Influenza Vaccination for Healthcare Personnel

Did You Know?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) recommend that all healthcare personnel get vaccinated annually against the flu.

Research Indicates

- Influenza outbreaks in hospitals and long-term care facilities have been attributed to low influenza vaccination coverage among healthcare personnel in the respective facilities.
- Higher vaccination levels among healthcare staff have been associated with lower risk of hospital-acquired influenza cases by both patients and staff.
- Vaccinating healthcare personnel (HCP) can reduce transmission of influenza, staff illness and absenteeism, and influenza-related illness and death.

Influenza Facts

- Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness and potentially lead to death.
- The best way to prevent the flu is getting vaccinated every year.
- Flu is mainly spread to others, often up to about 6 feet, by droplets that are made when people with the flu talk, sneeze, or cough. Droplets enter in the mouths and noses of those that are close by. Less common, a person may get the flu by touching a surface or an object that has flu virus on it and then touching his or her nose or mouth.
- The period of contagiousness varies. People can pass the flu to another person before they are aware that they are sick. Many healthy adults are able to infect people 1 day before symptoms develop through 5 to 7 days after becoming ill.
- Yearly vaccination among HCP is key, as influenza is unpredictable and flu virus strains are constantly changing. A flu vaccination from a previous season will not protect HCP against the current season's flu viruses.

Why Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Matters

- HCP have a unique role in fighting against influenza.
 - Ensuring HCP are vaccinated helps to protect both themselves and their patients.
 - High rates of vaccination among HCP are associated with improved patient outcomes and fewer cases of influenza among other staff members.

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- According to a study conducted among nursing personnel and physicians in California, 35.5% of HCP developed influenza-like illness during the influenza season and 76.6% of them cared for patients while sick.
- The number of hospitalized patients and healthcare personnel absenteeism is typically higher during the flu season, which increases the impact of flu-related absenteeism on hospital operations.

National Statistics Related to Healthcare Personnel

- During the 2010-11 influenza season, an estimated 63.5% of healthcare personnel in the U.S. were vaccinated against the flu.
- Among facilities that had an employer requirement for vaccination, 98.1% of healthcare personnel nationally were vaccinated.

For more information, contact the Immunization Program:

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